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The Astorian guarantees to its
advertisers the largest circulation of any
newspaper published on the Columbia
River.

AS TO CHARTERS.

The Oregonian tries to deduce from the fact that a vessel has been chartered for Portland loading at 25 shillings—5 shillings in advance of all charters recently fixed—that the circumstance does not warrant the belief that there will be any notable improvement in charters.

Our Portland contemporary, which seems quite anxious that charters should not rise, ignores the very important fact that Portland is a port just about 5 shillings higher than its neighbors. Were it not for the fact that unprecedented conditions led up more than 100,000 tons of shipping at San Francisco, those recent 20-shilling charters would never have been fixed for Portland.

If the Oregon metropolis were in position to properly handle the export business of the inland empire, with justice to the producers, it would not send 2000 to 4500 tons of wheat and barley south to San Francisco every week. Half a dozen steamers have done nothing else than take Oregon's grain down to San Francisco for months past, and we find the Portland Journal complaining because "other ports get the credit for this exporting." The steamers which carry our grain south are paid for the services \$2.00 to \$2.50 per ton, it is reasonable to suppose. Now this means that Portland is at a \$2-a-ton disadvantage compared with San Francisco in the matter of exports. It's an old stock, to be sure, but it has always been true.

Some day, when northwest producers are not dependent upon Portland for their exporting service, they will receive what their grain is actually worth—what it should legitimately bring. Perhaps when the Columbia bar is dredged away Astoria will be enabled to afford some relief along this line—provided, of course, Portland does not "fill in" the bar that will fit its charter.

INCREASED DEATH RATE.
The present winter has been particularly severe all over the country, and the number of deaths from pneumonia and kindred ailments has greatly increased. The New York city report for February shows an alarming increase, and other eastern cities make similar reports.

The significant fact announced that the largely increased mortality is attributed to grip and its complications. The death rate in the city of New York for the last week in February was 24.43 per 1000 inhabitants, which rate has not been equaled or exceeded since the epidemic of the grip, which occurred during the winter of 1892-3.

The epidemic of grip, moreover, has been very general throughout New York state, and the number of deaths this winter caused by the influenza and pneumonia has been greater than has been larger than for many years past. Despite the fact that the physicians are much more successful than formerly in fighting and arresting the grip, the malady seems to be passing all over to greater proportions than ever, and is attended by far more fatalities than in former years.

LABOR TROUBLES IN COAL MINES.

The unhappy days of the greatest coal strike in the history of the coal mining industry are recalled by a perusal of Edward W. Parker's report on "The Production of Coal in 1903," which the United States geological survey is about to issue as an extract from its annual volume of mineral resources.

The scenes of the principal labor difficulties in 1903 were laid in the anthracite regions of Pennsylvania, the New and Kanawha river districts of Michigan. The troubles in the anthracite district resulted in a decrease of nearly 40 per cent in production to the operators, as compared with 1901. Approximately 145,000 men were idle for 28 working days, and the public was put to greater inconvenience and dan-

gerance for want of fuel than had ever been known before in the history of the country. It is estimated that the total number of working days lost by the miners was 4,200,000, which, at an average of \$2.50 a day, meant a loss of about \$35,000,000 in wages.

The strikes in West Virginia were organized for the purpose of compelling the operators to recognize the union. The strikers carried their point in the Kanawha river, but in the New river district the strike failed of its purpose. The time lost in West Virginia in 1902 was 1,362 days, or nearly twice as much as that lost by strikes in all the United States in 1901. The estimated loss of tonnage for the state caused by the strike was about 4,500,000 tons, although, on account of increased activity in other portions of the state there was no actual decrease in output as compared with 1901.

The principal issue involved in the Michigan strike was the delivery of mine cars, the miners claiming that the companies should deliver the cars to and take them from the working places, instead of "loading from the room entrances." The strike was lost.

Michigan's production, which has only been developed to proportions of importance during the last three or four years, lost nearly 25 per cent in tonnage by the strike of 1902.

AN ABSURD STATEMENT.

A grimly sensational statement, made on the alleged authority of an experienced military man, presumably in the service of the United States, appeared recently in a metropolitan paper, which was to the effect that no surgeon would be needed by either of the contestants in the Russo-Japanese war, because both sides would relentlessly put their own wounded to death rather than permit them to fall into the hands of the "cruel enemy."

That this is a libel on both nations may well be assumed from the fact that the Red Cross is on both sides.

Recent statistics show that in 1901 Russia had over 600 committees and institutions having this work and some \$100,000-\$150,000 trained nurses. She also had \$6,500,000 in Red Cross funds, and \$3,500,000 in real estate contributory to the Societies. Japan's Red Cross system appears to be well regulated, with over \$4,000,000 in its treasury, an annual income of \$1,000,000 from its \$80,000 members and other sources and over 2,000 trained nurses. There are also two hospital ships for service for carrying wounded back to their own country.

This did not look as if either nation was likely to descend to the barbarism of putting its wounded to death. Moreover, the figures reflect great credit in both.

Incidentally, it may be observed that our own Red Cross system does not seem to be flourishing. The latest report of the national society shows \$114 in the treasury and makes no mention of its expenses. This state of things is doubtless due to the skirring among the members who

are the Red Cross of America.

There are two widows of revolutionaries still living. One of these is Rebecca Mayo, now over 90 years old, who resides at New Bern, N.C. Stephen Mayo, her husband, had four terms of service in the revolution, and fought at the battles of Brandywine and Germantown. He married him in 1834, when he was 77 years of age. The other surviving widow is Esther S. Duncan, of Plymouth Union, Vt. The committee on pensions of the United States house of representatives has reported in favor of granting an increase of pension to Mrs. Mayo from \$22 to \$25 a month.

It is a curious fact that when we speak of the emperor of Japan as the "Mikado" we employ a word which has almost exactly the same meaning as when we speak of the Turkish "Sultane Porte." The actual meaning of mikado is "August Great" (Kingship).

In discussing the race question in Congress Representative Williams, leader of the democrats, declared that there was no "equality between featherless bipeds." The remark has earned him the title of "feather headed Williams."

The anti-pistol law has been defeated in the Virginian legislature. This is well, as the law would have been harder to enforce than are the excise laws in New York city.

Rear Admiral Walker estimates that it will take the steady work of 40,000 men, who can stand the climate, eight years to finish the digging of the Panama canal.

The farmers of New York state do not care to have the army rangers held in their vicinity. They know a soldier's fondness for mischief.

The canal strip is to be placed under

the control of the war department. The only fighting there, however, will be against yellow fever.

An Arkansas mayor ordered his schools closed to prevent a lynching. He realized the connection between education and riot.

Scientists could prove that radium was to be found at the North Pole, that spot would soon be inhabited.

The bottle incident has not injured Senator Tillman's presidential nomination of the prohibition party.

Corea's administrative entity seems to be lost, strayed or stolen. Japan was about 4,500,000 tons, although, on account of increased activity in other portions of the state there was no actual decrease in output as compared with 1901.

Addicks had better chances of getting into the congressional contests than in the senate.

Jew baiters throughout the country offering prayers for the success of the Russian arms.

President Roosevelt has done much to raise the dignity of the vice presidential office.

If Russia carries out her threat to boycott American meat imports until they go hungry.

The Lilly Whites of the south should adopt the white feather as their emblem.

Our insular possessions may regard the anti-lottery law as a great hardship.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

Julian Hawthorne traces the Baltimore fire to the Angel of Destiny. The blaze at Chicago was started by Mrs. O'Leary's cow.

"It is better to be poor than to be a star," says the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Yes, if you don't mind being in the minority, Washington Post.

Governor Penrypaker has been made a factor of law but certain laws that he has interested himself in will remain undisturbed, nevertheless,

Washington State-Sunday, Mar. 12. The degree of LL.D. has been conferred upon Governor Penrypaker as this in recognition of his attempt to doctor the laws regulating free speech?

Baltimore Herald, Mar. 12. An expert declares that golf will cure nine-tenths of man's diseases. This leaves the other tenth to be worked on by the doctors and health food manufacturers.

Denver Republican, Mar. 12.

Citizens of Nogales, Ariz., met a turning bank absconder with a brass band and paraded him as he was led to prison. In the old days they would have met him with a larp—Washington Post.

The promptness and vigor with which they are dynamiting the Manchurian railways shows that the Japanese appreciate the importance of heading off that Russian shipment of Mississippian mules, Kansas City Times.

The girls are crying out again for the right to buy, officials must not marry on a salary of less than \$1,000 a year. They think the officers might at least have waited until year is over. How contemptible a cleric must feel when he refuses the offer of a pretty girl and gives her the reason.

Chicago Chronicle, Mar. 12. The girls are crying out again for the right to buy, officials must not marry on a salary of less than \$1,000 a year. They think the officers might at least have waited until year is over. How contemptible a cleric must feel when he refuses the offer of a pretty girl and gives her the reason.

Governor Penrypaker told an audience at the university of Pennsylvania recently that Washington wore false teeth, in part carved from the tusk of a hippopotamus.

He is libelous, under the strict new Pennsylvania law. Governor Penrypaker is no doubt responsible.

Boston Globe, Mar. 12. The girls are crying out again for the right to buy, officials must not marry on a salary of less than \$1,000 a year.

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